

TALKING POINTS FOR ADMINISTRATOR BOLDEN
Commercial Crew Processing Facility GRAND OPENING

Sept. 4, 2015

Thank you, Chris (Ferguson), and to you, Bob (Cabana) and John (Elbon) for your remarks. It's great to be here celebrating this tremendous milestone for commercial crew.

Not wanting to be left out, I also have a video. It's to the point and inspirational, kind of like commercial crew! Here it is...

PLAY "NASA's Journey to Mars" VIDEO

I think that video encapsulates what we're talking about today. We're on one of the greatest journeys that humans have ever taken - a journey to Mars.

From his very first days in office, President Obama made it a priority to return human spaceflight to American soil. Five years ago, speaking right here at the Kennedy Space Center, he laid out a strategy for space exploration in the 21st century. The centerpiece of this strategy was that Journey to Mars, which would culminate with sending American astronauts to the Red Planet in the 2030s.

While NASA is focused on getting our astronauts to deep space with the Space Launch System rocket and *Orion* spacecraft, the President's plan called for us to work with commercial partners to develop the vital capabilities for getting our astronauts and cargo to the International Space Station. Doing that would allow NASA to focus on deep space, while empowering American entrepreneurs and innovators to build a new commercial market in low-earth orbit and that day has come.

Commercial crew is an essential component of our journey to Mars, and in 35 states, 350 American companies are working to make it possible for the greatest country on Earth to once again launch our own astronauts into space. That's some impressive investment.

But right here, today, we're focused on one state, Florida, and the incredible things that The Boeing Company has done with this former orbiter processing facility, transforming it in to a state of the art place where a new American spacecraft has emerged.

Boeing's innovation and dedication have brought us to the cusp of this next great victory in our commercial space program. This is a time and place for which we've all worked long and hard. The fact that we're here today says a lot about our confidence in the progress of commercial crew.

But it speaks especially to Boeing's energy, excitement and belief in the new system they have been perfecting for taking our astronauts -- and really our hopes and dreams for the future -- to space.

Everyone knows that I was blessed four times with the opportunity to travel to space aboard the space shuttle. It was an amazing vehicle that Bob, Chris and I and many other men and women were proud to fly. We continue to build on its legacy today.

Now, a new era is dawning – a new era of spaceflight with previously undreamed-of possibilities. Bob and the entire Kennedy team have transformed KSC into a multi-user spaceport with untold potential and make no mistake, the road to space still blazes through Kennedy.

We've already named the astronauts who are beginning training to be the first to fly on commercial spacecraft.

It's no longer just an idea, as you can see here today. It's reality. It won't be long before the smoke and fire you see here in Florida is from commercial rockets launching human beings once again to our future in space.

Our work is far from done, but we have momentum; we have innovation; and most of all, we have the drive to get the job done, and done right.

I couldn't be more excited to be here today. I congratulate the entire Boeing and NASA teams that have made this milestone possible. I know we have a bright future ahead and I can't wait to see our astronauts boarding a Boeing spacecraft bound for space.

Thank you.

